

For most Nigerian households, the bulk of our money goes for housing and transportation. Still, we spend a lot on fashion, entertainment, and food eaten in restaurants and hotels.

Wouldn't it be nice to spend a little less?

Fortunately, there are a number of tried and true ways to save money on virtually everything you buy. In fact, we call them our 15 golden rules to super savings, and here they are.

### **1. Never buy new what you can buy used**

To start, if you want to save money on everything you buy, you should never buy new. Well, not never but nearly never buy new. I am sure you might possibly want to buy new underwear.

But for most everything else, let someone else take the depreciation hit. The product in the market loses 11 percent of its value the moment it is bought by the customer. After five years, new vehicles typically lose about 63 percent of their value.

Cars might be the best-known example, but virtually everything depreciates over time. Jewelry, furniture, appliances, and even video games and movies can depreciate faster than you can say "bingo."

### **2. Buy in bulk**

Let's say you use a lot of batteries. Why buy four batteries when you could buy 40? Or consider Pure Water, a single one is N10 while a bag of twenty is N100. That means if you buy the bag it will cost you half the price of one single sachet. Buying in bulk can be an excellent way to lower your per-unit cost. In fact, when you buy some goods in large quantities, the producers transport them to you for free.

### **3. control your impulse by using a shopping list**

Have you ever bought something you did not want to buy and also that you did not need from a market simply because you saw it? what you just did is called impulse buying. It's hard to put a number on how much impulse buying costs us each but the price we pay for our impulses is very high.

Control the tendency to impulse buy by limiting yourself to what's on your shopping list. Don't use a list only for food stuff. Create an ongoing list of planned purchases. When you notice your shoes are wearing thin, add shoes to the list. When you decide you need a bigger laptop, add that to the list.

Then when you are tempted to buy something on the spur of the moment, refer to your list. If it's not there, remind yourself that you don't need it and that money spent on impulse takes away cash that could be used to buy something you really want.

#### **4. Remember that brand names cost more money**

If you're buying a brand name, you're likely spending extra cash and may not be getting much in return.

You can save anywhere from 30 to 52 percent by buying things that are not popular but serve your needs. What exactly is branding? Branding is when a company makes its product so popular that everyone wants to be identified with the product. There may be other products competing with it but people rarely buy them because they don't have advanced brand names. Because of this, the smaller brand names sell at cheaper prices.

This applies even in drugs. A company that buys the generic names of drugs usually sell their products at a higher price than companies that must create their own name. In most cases, there is no difference at in the products because both companies have met the safety standards of the country.

#### **5. Negotiate for the lowest price**

You're missing out on great savings if the only time you negotiate is when you're boarding a rickshaw or *keke napep*, like we like to call it. always try to negotiate the best prices possible for any product you want to buy. For example, before buying a television, go out to window shop and find out the prices of the same product from different shops and also of competing products that offer the same options. Compare notes on the best bargain before you commit your finances.

## **6. Stop being the first to buy a product**

Always having the latest and greatest gadget or product might make you the coolest in your circle of friends, but it's also going to empty your wallet in a hurry. You're paying a lot of naira for something you could probably get for significantly less a short year later.

Why do you need to upgrade anyway? Why buy an Ego for Bently laptop when your HP G6 is working perfectly fine? The Internet exploded in 2014 when the Mike Adenuga was photographed using a cheap phone. Some people laughed, saying he was behind the times, but he's a billionaire so, really, who should laugh at who?

## **7. Make a habit of sharing purchases**

Is there really a need for everyone in your compound to own a generator? If your generator can carry the load, can you share the cost of petrol with your neighbor and then do the same later with his generator?

Make a point to look for ways you can share purchases with others. Maybe that means going out with friends and neighbors to make purchases, or it could be as simple as calling up your friend and asking if she wants to go somewhere so you can go in one car. The point is that you should save money by doing things with others.

## **8. Consider whether you can make it or do it yourself**

You can save a lot of money if you do things yourself rather than paying someone else. From fixing your own satellite dish to cooking your special meals, many of the things you buy could be replaced by your own effort or ingenuity. Having said that, I don't recommend treating yourself of any sicknesses at home.

#### **9. Compare, compare, compare**

Knowledge is power, and your money will have more buying power if you take the time to do a little research. Never make a purchase without first checking prices at other retailers and online.

#### **10. Don't buy under pressure**

Of course, intelligent salesmen and retailers won't want you to shop somewhere else apart from them. There is always a chance that they will pressure you, arguing that the prices have never been so low or their manager is making a special deal for you that will only be available for only one day.

They are trying to back you into a corner where you feel you can't possibly say no. But competition is fierce, and the reality is there will always be another sale. Another opportunity to buy the same product or service cheaper will always arise.

Don't buy unless you've done enough research to know the deal is good.

#### **11. Try doing without**

You may be inclined to run out and buy something as soon as the old version has worn out or breaks. However, wait a couple of days or, even better, a couple of weeks before making a purchase. You may find you can do without the item, or you may discover you have another item that can work as a perfectly acceptable substitute.

#### **12. Only pay cash**

Finally, if you really want to save money on everything you'll ever buy, only pay with cash. Using cash discourages spending, while your ATM and online platforms encourage it. In addition, spending cash keeps you accountable by ensuring you only use the money you have on hand rather than basing your purchases on some vague notion of what might be available in your bank.